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## **Alabama Historical Commission awards Spirit of Athens Distinguished Service Award**

The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) has awarded a 2009 Distinguished Service Award to Spirit of Athens Main Street. The Distinguished Service Award is awarded annually to individuals and groups whose contributions demonstrate excellence in historic preservation.

Alabama's Main Street organizations are demonstrating that historic preservation plays a key role in downtown revitalization and economic development, in tourism, and in overall community health. At the same time, these volunteer led organizations are saving hundreds of downtown commercial buildings, with ripple effects that extend to nearby historic homes and neighborhoods, and outlying farmhouses and former plantation homes. The volunteer leadership of these organizations have persevered in the face of the economic downturns, profound demographic changes, and shifting political winds at the local level. The work they do is not only helping use historic buildings as assets, but is helping to make Alabama a better place to live and visit.

Main Street is a community-driven program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that is used to revitalize downtown and neighborhood business districts throughout the United States.

The AHC presented the award on Friday, October 9 during this year's Alabama Preservation Conference in Auburn.

For more information on Spirit of Athens, visit: [www.spiritofathens.com](http://www.spiritofathens.com).

*To protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places is the mission of the **Alabama Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office.***

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